(b) to (d) Some private parties have reportedly installed cleaning facilities for wheat at some ports. FCI has also been instructed to set up cleaning facilities at Kandla or any other port from which export takes place.

Distribution of Sugar at Cheaper rate

493. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have invited views of all the State Governments on a proposal for distribution of sugar at cheaper rates through the Ration Shops to the poor person in the country by decontrolling sugar industry fully;

(b) if so, the response thereto; and

(c) the steps propose or to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) and (b) Government of India solicited the views of the Government of the surplus sugar producing States as well as the sugar deficit States on whether sugar distribution under the Public Distribution System (PDS) should continue even after complete decontrol of sugar and if so, the modalities thereof. The majority of the States have suggested that the distribution of sugar under PDS should continue even after the complete decontrol of sugar. As regards the modalities of such distribution, different views have been expressed.

(c) Levy sugar distribution under the Public Distribution System is presently continuing.

Discontinuance of rice supply to Traders

494. PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after having accepted the bids from the traders in the non-rice procuring State for selling the overflowing rice stock in Punjab godowns, the supply of rice to the traders was abruptly discontinued by FCI;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof stating the quantity of rice supplied by FCI to each of the trader whose bids were accepted as against the committed supply;

(c) what are the reasons for discontinuing the supply of rice abruptly; and

(d) what steps have been taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

New Foodgrain Procurement Policy

495. SHRI ANANTA SETHI : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to introduce a new foodgrain procurement policy;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof;

(c) whether the consent of the State Government has been taken on the policy; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the State Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) and (b) In 1997-98, Government decided to introduce a Scheme of decentralised procurement and distribution of wheat and rice. The salient features of the scheme are:—

(i) State Agency shall procure, store and issue foodgrains for PDS as per the allocation made by the Central Government.

(ii) The Central Government shall work out the subsidy payable based on the differential of economic cost of the State and the Central Issue Price.

(iii) Procurement in excess of PDS requirement can be handed over to the Food Corporation of India.

(c) and (d) The Government of West Bengal adopted this Scheme for rice from 1997-98 Kharif Marketing Season. Government of MP started implementing this Scheme for wheat in 1999-2000 Rabi Marketing Season. Government of UP adopted this Scheme for both wheat and rice during 1999-2000. The other States have not yet adopted this Scheme. The issue